

AD-A170 607

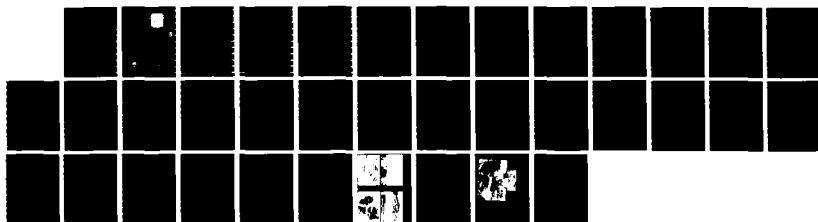
THE SEARCH FOR GENERAL JOHN MILLER AND THE  
REVOLUTIONARY OFFICER(U) ARMY WAR COLL CARLISLE  
BARRACKS PA J M GRAYOIS ET AL. 01 APR 86

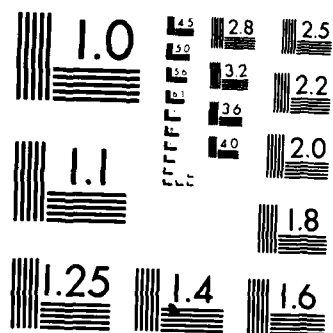
1/1

UNCLASSIFIED

F/G 5/2

NL





MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS 1963-A

(2)

# STUDY PROJECT

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

AD-A170 607

THE SEARCH FOR GENERAL JOHN MILLER  
AND  
THE REVOLUTIONARY OFFICER

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN M. GRAVOIS  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL RUDY A. STUPAR

DTIC  
SELECTE  
AUG 05 1986  
S D

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:  
Approved for public release;  
distribution is unlimited.

1 APRIL 1986

THIS FILE COPY



US ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013

36

8

119

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
AD-A170607		
4. TITLE (and Subtitle)	5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED	
The Search for General John Miller and The Revolutionary Officer	STUDENT PAPER	
	6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER	
7. AUTHOR(s)	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)	
LTC John M. Gravois LTC Rudy A. Stupar		
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS	
U.S. Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050		
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS	12. REPORT DATE	
SAME	1 April 1986	
	13. NUMBER OF PAGES	
	32	
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)	15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report)	
	UNCLASSIFIED	
	15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE	
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)		
DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)		
<p>The research of the "generalship" of General John Miller was undertaken along two paths--i.e., a search of historical records on him as an individual and the study of the commissioning process of officers during the revolutionary period. It was our belief that through these areas we would not only be able to trace the historical background on General John Miller, but also understand how he might have received his commission. The research did reveal much about the individual John Miller, and it did disclose much</p> <p>(continued)</p>		

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

BLOCK 20 (continued)

about the commissioning process. Our understanding of that process and the records available in the National and Pennsylvania Archives have led us to the conclusion that John Miller held no legitimate commission as an officer in the Continental Army or the Pennsylvania Militia.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

THE SEARCH FOR GENERAL JOHN MILLER  
AND  
THE REVOLUTIONARY OFFICER  
A GROUP STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel John M. Gravois  
Lieutenant Colonel Rudy A. Stupar

Colonel (Retired) D. L. Adams  
Project Adviser

US Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013  
1 April 1986

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:  
Approved for public release;  
distribution is unlimited.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT . . . . .	ii
PREFACE . . . . .	iii
CHAPTER I. THE SEARCH FOR GENERAL JOHN MILLER . . . . .	1
II. THE REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY OFFICER	
1775-1790 . . . . .	13
Introduction . . . . .	13
Historical Perspective . . . . .	13
The Revolutionary Period . . . . .	14
General Officers . . . . .	16
Foreign Officers . . . . .	17
Appointments and Promotions . . . . .	18
Training . . . . .	19
Conclusion . . . . .	21
ENDNOTES . . . . .	22
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	24
APPENDIX 1. PICTURES OF GRAVESITE . . . . .	26
2. SUMMARY CARD VETERANS GRAVE REGISTRATION . . . . .	27
3. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, 7 DECEMBER 1985 . . . . .	28

# ABSTRACT

AUTHORS: John Gravois, LTC, OD  
Rudy Stupar, LTC, MP

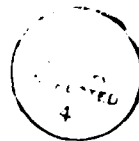
TITLE: The Search for General John Miller and The  
Revolutionary Officer

FORMAT: Group Study Project

DATE: 1 April 1986 PAGES: 28 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The research of the "generalship" of General John Miller was undertaken along two paths--i.e. a search of historical records on him as an individual, and the study of the commissioning process of officers during the revolutionary period. It was our belief that through these areas we would not only be able to trace the historical background on General John Miller, but also understand how he might have received his commission. The research did reveal much about the individual, John Miller, and it did disclose much about the commissioning process. Our understanding of that process and the records available in the National and Pennsylvania Archives have led us to the conclusion that John Miller held no legitimate commission as an officer in the Continental Army or the Pennsylvania Militia.

Accession For	
NTIS CRA&I	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	





## PREFACE

This Group Study Project was produced under the aegis of the US Army War College Military History Directorate. The research paper was done to validate the generalship of General John Miller whose grave is located at one of the researcher's homes and to enhance the understanding of the colonial military officer commissioning process. It began by researching the background of General Miller's gravesite. Validation required learning who John Miller really was and how he was commissioned. Research included a search of the Pennsylvania and National Archives, the US Army Military Institute, Hamilton Library, newspapers, and church records. The outstanding assistance of Colonel (Retired) Trussel, the staff of the US Army Military Institute, the Pennsylvania Archives, and Hamilton Library was absolutely outstanding and crucial to our project.

## CHAPTER I

### THE SEARCH FOR GENERAL JOHN MILLER

In a pasture just three miles due east of Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, lies a dilapidated grave whose marker one can decipher only with difficulty. It reads: "In Memory of General John Miller who departed this life January the 10th, 1812 in the 67th year of his age." Interest in this grave and a fascination with the title "General" led the authors on a "quest" for information about General John Miller. (Photographs at Appendix 1.) The search began in earnest at the Hamilton Library, home of the Cumberland County Historical Society.

Preliminary research indicated that the farm on which the grave is situated once belonged to one Matthew Miller, an Irish immigrant who came to the Carlisle area in 1730 and purchased a large tract of land from William Penn's heirs.<sup>1</sup> Matthew apparently was a man of some prominence and wealth. He served as a Cumberland County Justice and perhaps enjoyed the companionship of the Urie, Trindle, and Chambers families who were his neighbors.<sup>2</sup> Matthew's oldest son, John Miller, was bequeathed the farm in Matthew's will dated 29 December 1783.<sup>3</sup> Matthew also stipulated that he should be buried "in a Decent and Christian like manner at the discretion of my executors." In the will he appointed both John and Matthew, Jr. to be two of the executors. Next to John Miller's headstone, another barely discernible gravesite was also discovered. This, it turns out, is the burial site of Matthew, Sr. A document describing gravesites in

Cumberland County was found in the Hamilton Library. It was prepared by J. Zeamer in 1905 and describes two graves found in Middlesex Township on the "Old Hoffer Farm."<sup>4</sup> Zeamer wrote, "I visited the place on the afternoon of November 17, 1905, and found it located just west of the barn and in it two marked graves as follows:

Miller, Gen John, d. Jan 10, 1812, in the 67th year of<sup>5</sup> his age  
Miller, Matthew, Sen., d. Aug. 28, 1790, agd 72 years.

Further, searches of the property have revealed remnants of an old slate gravestone with an "M" still decipherable, just a few feet from John Miller's grave. We discovered that we were not the first to begin research into the mysterious General John Miller and noted with a sinking feeling that previous efforts to discover the nature of his generalship had proved fruitless. Mr. Charles Gilbert Beetem, the Cumberland Valley Archivist, in an 18 September 1935 letter to Major Roland T. Fenton, a property owner near the Miller farm, stated that he had begun research but was having no luck.

Referring to the marble tomb of General John Miller, located near you, but now in ruins, it is back of the barn on the farm owned, in 1872 and later, by C. Hoffer, and is reached by taking the fourth north cross-road on Trindle Road east of Carlisle, and will be found about one mile up said cross-road, at the second premises on the west side of the road. This general was in the Revolutionary War: The condition of his grave should be brot [sic] to the attention of the country commissioners. For a year I have been trying to find out something about General Miller; have searched the Pennsylvania Archives and a number of books. The War Department is averse to taking the time for such research work, but I believe if you wrote them asking for information and the record of this general for the county archivist, they will supply a copy of whatever record they have of him in the files.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Beetem also wrote to the Pennsylvania Historical Commission asking for assistance in restoring the grave and to a Mr. Robert Winstein, a local historian, asking for a search of the minutes of the Continental Congress. There is no record in the Hamilton Library providing results of Mr. Beetem's research.

Given his life-span the obvious assumption is that General Miller had been a general officer serving in the Continental line during the American Revolution, or possibly, that he held that rank in the state militia.

Extremely good records of those who served in that conflict were maintained and still survive, and there is no General John Miller of Pennsylvania listed among them.

A quick check of the obituary files revealed that (on Friday, January 17, 1812) both the Kline's Gazette and the Carlisle Herald carried the announcement of John Miller's death.<sup>7</sup> Both listed him as Mr. John Miller with no reference to the title general. It is interesting to note, however, that on Thursday, October 6th, 1831, the American Volunteer announced the death on "Thursday, September 29, of Mrs. Ann Miller, wife of General John Miller, late of . . . "<sup>8</sup> One wonders why the death of John Miller made no reference to title, but that the death of his wife was highlighted by reference to the title of her late husband.

The microfilmed tax records for Cumberland County located in the Pennsylvania State Archives were carefully reviewed to see if any mention was made of John Miller's generalship.<sup>9</sup> Many of the taxpayers on the lists carry military titles in the record such as CAPT, MAJOR, General, Ensign, and Colonel, so it would seem

reasonable that the tax collector would have recorded such a title during at least one year if not more often. John Miller began paying taxes in the year 1776 on one horse and one cow as his only property. As he ammassed his wealth, he eventually paid taxes yearly on 346 acres, horses, cows, trade (he was a blacksmith as well as a farmer), stills and Negro slaves. Based upon the value of taxes that he paid, he was one of the more wealthy citizens of the Carlisle area during his lifetime, but never was he cited as a general.

As luck would have it, in early December 1985, the local Carlisle newspaper, the Sentinel, contacted Lieutenant Colonel John Gravois, one of the researchers for this project, concerning the possibility that the house in which he was living had been a waystation for the Underground kailroad during the pre-Civil War period. The house in question is located on the property containing General Miller's gravesite. As information was exchanged, the newspaper became more interested in the saga of General John Miller than in the Underground Railroad lead. On 7 December, the newspaper published a front page article entitled Generally, Miller's a Mystery. (Appendix 2)<sup>10</sup> As a result of the newspaper coverage, the researchers received many calls providing much information, some of value, most of it useless. The most exciting piece of information was provided by Mr. Jack Sunday of Carlisle who provided a copy of a Veterans' Grave Registration Summary Card from the Cumberland County Veterans' Administration Office. (Appendix 3) This summary card speculated that John Miller was an officer in the Continental Line and the Militia

. . . a contradiction in that one could belong to either, but not both. The reference to the Continental Line and a reference in the Ege Family Genealogy<sup>11</sup> caused the authors to suspect that there was a possibility that the National Archives in Washington, D.C. might provide more definitive information. First, however, Heitman's Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army<sup>12</sup> was checked, with no success, to ascertain if John Miller was listed as a Revolutionary Officer of the Continental Line. The National Archives microfilm index of the personnel records of all soldiers to have served in the Revolutionary War was screened. The only John Miller from Cumberland County who was listed was killed in combat in 1776 in New York. A further check of the Pension Records shows that no John Miller of Cumberland County ever applied for a pension as a veteran of the Revolutionary War. The research assistance provided by the National Archives Staff was superb. The Revolutionary War archivist who assisted in the search was reasonably convinced that our John Miller never served in the Continental Line.

The next avenue explored was the reference on the Graves Registration Summary Card which listed the Ege Family Genealogy as a source. In it the author, Reverend Ege, lists General John Miller as having been "a veteran of the wars of the Revolution and 1812."<sup>13</sup> A very quick check of the history books shows that the War of 1812 was formally declared in June of 1812 and a requirement to create a stand-by force of 100,000 militia men was generated in May 1812. By this time, John Miller had already

been dead four months. The search for John Miller then led the researchers to the Pennsylvania Archives.

Having satisfactorily eliminated all possibility that Miller served in the Continental army, the next phase of research was devoted to a study of the history of the Pennsylvania Militia from the Revolutionary War period through the beginning of the War of 1812.

The origins of the Pennsylvania Militia date back to 1747 and its father was none other than Benjamin Franklin. By that year every colony except Pennsylvania had established a militia system. Proposals to establish these military organizations had been made in the Provincial Assembly, but the colony's Quaker forces defeated the proposal each time. However, in 1747, during the War of the Austrian Succession, the people of Pennsylvania felt a threat to their territory from the French. Benjamin Franklin felt that the Assembly would again defeat any proposal for the establishment of a military force, so he anonymously published a pamphlet urging the citizens to form voluntary "military associations." The idea flourished, and by the end of 1748, it was estimated that between 10,000 and 12,000 men belonged to the association's units.<sup>14</sup> After that threat to security had subsided following the scare of the War of the Austrian Succession, the Association Units all but went out of existence, and on the eve of the Revolutionary War there were no legally sanctioned units. The associations were followed by the all-volunteer "Flying-Camp" of 1776, a group of Pennsylvania units who fought with George Washington in New York and New

Jersey. As the volunteers dwindled in number, the need for compulsory universal military service became apparent, and on March 17, 1777 the First General Militia Act was passed, establishing the militia in Pennsylvania. This act mandated enrollment in the militia of every able-bodied white male between 18 and 53. Few exceptions were made and, these were limited to national and state political leaders, clergymen, faculty members of colleges and servants purchased in good faith.<sup>15</sup> As a mechanism to establish and organize the militia, the president of the Provincial Council appointed a lieutenant for each county and for the city of Philadelphia. These lieutenants should not be confused with line officer lieutenants, for each county lieutenant held a rank equivalent to lieutenant colonel. Each of these lieutenants was to geographically divide his county into districts containing 440-1000 privates. This district basically corresponded to a militia battalion. Each district was then subdivided into eight company-sized geographical sub-districts corresponding to companies.

Each company was divided into eight classes by drawn lots. To avoid depleting any area of a significant portion of its manpower, only one-eighth of each company (one class) would be called-up for active service for a period of two months. The call-ups would begin with the first class and proceed through the eighth class. No class could be called a second time until all other classes had been called. As one class from each company was mobilized, the militia men would form into a temporary (two month) marching company which would draw its officers from



different companies of the battalion (district). Therefore, no militia soldier of any county would serve with the man of his militia training company, and rarely would he serve with his own officers. If a militia soldier failed to report for a call-up, he was levied a fine or a scutage which would be used to hire a substitute to serve in his place. The soldier could furnish his own substitute or the county lieutenant could hire one.

Substitutes were generally paid more than the militia privates who were called, so the market was quite rich. The main limitation was that a substitute had to be of a different class than the man he was replacing.

Since these company-sized subdistricts were strictly geographical and militia service mandatory, it seemed inevitable that John Miller could be found if the right company could be located in the Archives.

In a Pennsylvania Militia general information file, located in the search room in the Pennsylvania Archives, we found a list of the officials of the Cumberland County militia.<sup>16</sup> One of the county lieutenants, John Caruthers, served for two years, and maintained a "fine book" which is preserved in the Archives. This book was used to record fines for individuals missing musters, as well as scutages for not rendering service on an actual call-up. Also on file in the Archives is a card file of all men who enrolled in or served in the militia. Here, the name "John Miller" was a particular nuisance; John Millers abounded! A more esoteric surname would have made the search much easier. Many John Millers were on the list, but only three entries

belonged to the 2d Battalion which was the militia organization located in the Carlisle area. These three entries are all located in the Caruther's Fine Book.<sup>17</sup> The first entry was for Private John Miller, 2d Battalion, 6th Company, 4th Class, who was fined L41'17'6 (a scutage) for not responding to a 4th class call-up on October 23, 1777. (This was immediately after the battles of Brandywine and Germantown and just prior to the Battle of Saratoga.) With the scutage paid, a substitute was hired to take John Miller's place. A typical salary for the two months service of a substitute in that month was about L20. The second entry was obviously the same person. Private John Miller, 2d Battalion, 6th Company, 4th Class was fined L100 (scutage) for not rendering service during a call-up on July 14th, 1778. This call-up constituted the second tour for the Third and Fourth Classes and required 300 men to report to "Ye Standing Stone" (obviously a prominent terrain feature in Huntingdon County) to form patrols to interdict Indian raids which were anticipated. The substitutes were typically being paid 35L for two months service. The third entry was for Private John Miller of 2d Battalion, 8th Company, 4th Class and was an Authority Class Roll for September 20th, 1780. This role listed all members of the 8th Company (by class) commanded by Captain John Jordon of Carlisle. Along with the class role were muster attendance records for 1780 through 1782. In researching the company commanders of the militia companies, it was found that Captain Jordan commanded the 6th Company and the 8th Company.<sup>18</sup> It was customary to change militia company names based on the seniority

of the various commanders, so it is almost certain that the 6th and 8th companies were one and the same. A comparison of the rolls of the privates showed that the same militia men were in both companies. The only remaining problem was to prove that this Private John Miller was the same person as our "General John Miller.

In 1798 a property tax was levied on all property owners in Pennsylvania and was commonly called the "Glass Tax" because the number of windows was the basis of the size of the levy. In the recording of the tax on barns and farms, the nearest neighbor was listed. By looking at the taxes of John and Matthew Miller, we find that the neighbors were men who were in the militia rolls of 1780 through 1782 of the 8th Company, 2d Battalion. The names of Samuel Postelwaith, James Chambers, Matthew Miller, Jr., and William Irvine are found repeatedly. In Matthew Miller, Sr.'s will, his property is listed as being bordered by the Irvine property.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that since militia companies were strictly geographical and since a great many neighbors of "General" John Miller are also on the rolls of the 6th and 8th companies of the 2d Battalion, the Private John Miller and the "General" John Miller are one and the same person.

The Class Rolls of the 8th Company, 2d Battalion of the Cumberland County militia contain muster attendance rolls for two full years (1781-1782). The entire county operated on a single training schedule which specified specific days for each company's training. The County Brigade Inspector would travel

through the county and check training and readiness. Each company was required to perform four company musters in the April/May timeframe and four in October/November timeframe. The entire battalion would have a field day in May and November of each year. (These gradually became county fairs.) It is most interesting to note in the company rolls that Private John Miller attended every single company and battalion training day. There are few other soldiers who were as loyal to their military training as John Miller. His other wealthy neighbors, James Chambers (who later became a militia company captain), Samuel Postelwaith (later a militia captain, sheriff, and two-time country clerk) and William Irvine (later Major General William Irvin, Commander of the 6th Division of the Pennsylvania Militia) all missed several of the "drills." It appears that John Miller enjoyed the militia for he could certainly afford the fines of missing the musters. He was, however, an "all show and no go" soldier since each time his class was called out, he chose to remain at home and pay his scrutage.

As we completed our search of the records in Carlisle, Harrisburg, and Washington, we contacted Colonel John B.B. Trussell, Historian of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and reputedly the leading Pennsylvania Revolutionary War historian in the area. His suggestions were that the only possible valid commissions which could have resulted in the title of "General" would have been the County Brigade Inspectors (Inspector General), The Brigade Adjutants (Adjutant General), or possibly Commissary General or Quartermaster General. The

commissioning books were again searched and again General John Miller of Cumberland County failed to appear. The origin of the title on his gravestone, in his wife's obituary and in the Ege Family Genealogy can only be speculated on. The graves registration summary card may provide a clue which has remained unfound. "The rank 'General' may have been obtained as a member of the famous 'Bluediens,' a militia organization of Middleton Township." A thorough search of all known militia unit names was made and no record exists today of any unit name resembling "Bluediers." We can only speculate that John Miller's enthusiasm for the military led him to join or to organize an unofficial military club in which he had a leadership role. Of course, any military leader, even of a club, would like the title of general. John Miller and the citizens of Carlisle, probably never took the title very seriously since it is not mentioned in his will, his obituary or any tax records. His family, however, may have enjoyed the title since his grave and the Ege genealogy bear the title proudly.

It is somewhat sad to end this research by "defrocking" a "General of the Wars of the Revolution and 1812" but the truth must be told. John Miller was apparently an outstanding citizen, a proud American and a fine militia private, but he was no General.

## CHAPTER II

### THE REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY OFFICER 1775-1790

#### INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this paper is to examine the commissioning process in the American military, both the Continental Army and the militia during the Revolutionary period. In its simplest form, the commissioning process consisted of only three methods--election by the soldiers, appointment by state legislature, or appointment by the Continental Congress. To merely state this without further elaboration would leave many unanswered questions, therefore, issues regarding why this method was chosen, the quality of the officers thus produced, promotions, etc., will be discussed. This paper will deal with these questions as well as others that are pertinent to the subject.

#### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The colonial military system had its roots in eighteenth century Europe. The professional armies of that period were manned according to class; princes, counts, earls, marquis, and barons, in other words the men who held position by hereditary right, royal favor, or purchase, filled the higher commands, while "gentlemen" of lesser rank usually served as captains and lieutenants.<sup>19</sup> The officers were not

professional soldiers or technically competent by standards used to evaluate today's officer corps. Their commissions were usually bought or inherited. An aristocrat was schooled in the fine points of horsemanship, fencing, shooting and other socially acceptable skills deemed necessary for his rank and station in life; however, the rudiments of military tactics were learned through experience on the battlefield.

As the officers came from the highest class, so the men in ranks came from the lowest. They were normally recruited for long terms of service, sometimes by force, from among the peasants and the urban unemployed. There was more than a sprinkling of pompous, ne'er-do-wells, convicts, and drifters in the ranks.<sup>20</sup>

It was from this background that our Army evolved. both our officers and enlisted corps originally followed many of the traditions of the European system, but it also developed many of its own peculiarities.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

During our colonial period we had basically three types of armies. There was the Continental Line or the regulars, the local militia, and the state militia. All three worked independently, but on occasion when the local and state militia were mobilized, they worked together. It should be noted that all three had their own officers. It was also not uncommon for a state to mobilize its forces and have several

divisions of soldiers with a full complement of officers for a given period of time. What also made it interesting was the fact that when the state and local militia were federalized, their officers became officers of equivalent rank in the Continental Line.

Under the Articles of Confederation, the states were responsible for raising troops for the Continental Army, for organizing and equipping them, and for appointing officers through the rank of colonel.<sup>21</sup>

The Continental Congress passed several acts that had to do with the raising of armed forces. Many believe that the resolution dated July 18, 1775, was the one that laid the framework for all subsequent military service acts. It was significant in that it enumerated on the composition of the Army, and the make-up and commissioning of the officer corps. In part, the resolution is quoted:<sup>22</sup>

"Resolved, that it be recommended to the inhabitants of all the united English Colonies in North America, that all able bodied effective men, between sixteen and fifty years of age in each colony, immediately form themselves into regular companies of Militia, to consist of one captain, two lieutenants, one ensign, four sergeants, four corporals, one clerk, one drummer, one fifer, and about 68 privates.

That the officers of each company be chosen by the respective companies.

That all officers above the rank of a captain, be appointed by their respective provincial assemblies or conventions, or in their recess, by the committees of safety appointed by assemblies or conventions.

That all officers be commissioned by the provincial Assemblies or conventions, or in



their recess by the committees of safety appointed by Assemblies or conventions."

The method of choosing officers at company level varied from unit to unit. One way is clearly reflected in the very first entry dated June 29, 1775, of the journal kept by Private Aaron Wright of a Pennsylvania rifle company:<sup>23</sup>

"We were sworn to be true and faithful soldiers in the Continental Army, under the direction of the Right Honorable Congress. After that we chose our officers. . . . When on parade our 1st Lieutenant came and told us he would be glad if we could excuse him from going, which we refused; and on consideration, we concluded it was better to consent; after which he said he would go; but we said, 'you shall not command us, for whose mind can change in an hour, is not fit to command in a field where liberty is contended for.' In the evening we chose a private in his place."

#### GENERAL OFFICERS

General Washington was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army on June 15, 1775. General Washington was not a veteran, but was an administrator and a Virginia aristocrat. It does not appear that the Continental Congress took much account of this qualification. Nor did the delegates hold it against Washington that at the age of forty-three, he had only a fair education for his day and had no travel outside the country except a brief visit to a West Indies island. More than a third of the other members of Congress had studied at some American or British college, and nearly as many had taken a voyage to England. The new

Commander-in-Chief owed his election first of all to a political motive, and secondarily to the impression made by his personality and the blue uniform he wore while serving as a Virginia delegate.<sup>24</sup>

Most of the other generals were chosen for similar reasons. It seemed expedient to elect a Massachusetts man as second in command, but Artemas Ward was neither of an age nor physical condition for an active part. Congress intended Washington's actual assistant to be Charles Lee, a recent British officer of high reputation who had adopted the American cause. Horatio Gates, another convert who had served in the British Army with distinction, became adjutant general. The two remaining major general commissions went to Israel Putnam of Connecticut and a wealthy New York landed proprietor, Philip Schuyler.<sup>25</sup>

#### FOREIGN OFFICERS

As stated in the previous section on Generals, it was not uncommon to have foreign officers given commissions in the Continental Line. Most were Frenchmen, and it was not unusual for Europeans to hire themselves out in a foreign army. Many sought fortune, fame, and some even championed the American cause.

In their relations with foreign officers, Congress made many blunders, and were guilty of reprehensible vacillation and carelessness. They gave high rank to worthless

adventurers, thereby incurring unnecessary expense and disgusting the American officers. It must be remembered; however, that they were anxious to oblige influential persons at the French Court, and they lacked the means of judging the merits of applicants. In spite of these disadvantages, they obtained some good men, who proved brave and enterprising field-officers, such as Armand, Fleury, and Plessis; valuable engineers, like Kosciusko and Duportail; and a courageous and experienced general, Kalb. More important than all, and outweighing the mischief of all the unlucky foreign appointments, Congress accepted the services of Steuben and of Lafayette, one of who trained the Army, and the other cemented the French alliance.<sup>26</sup>

#### APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

As it has been noted, there seemed to be no set methodology for appointments or promotions. There were no promotion boards, schools, longevity, etc., required as there is in today's Army. It was also not necessarily one's courage, patriotism, or competence that resulted in advancement. Many officers believed in promotion strictly on seniority, and if they were passed over, they believed they were unfit for service and should resign. Progression in the officer corps depended on many motives and criteria and is no better expressed than by its first commander-in-chief.

General Washington himself frankly recognized the necessity for promotions based on qualifications that were not strictly military when he wrote to Heath on March 21, 1781: "But if officers will not see into the political motives by which I am sometimes governed in my appointments, and which the good of the common cause renders indispensably necessary, it is unfortunate; but it cannot, because it ought not, divert me from the practice of a duty, which I think promotive of the interest of the United States, and consistent with the view of the power under which I act."<sup>27</sup>

#### TRAINING

There is no evidence to suggest that there was any formal training for officers. The thinking that prevailed was that officers were gentlemen and men of honor who were professionals. Most officers saw no need for their own military training because we followed the premise held in the British system--that system was that sergeants trained and drilled the soldiers and it was assumed that because one was an officer and a gentleman, that the necessary competence to be an officer was taken for granted. One of the leaders during the Revolutionary period who did not subscribe to this philosophy was General Von Steuben. He strongly believed in training. He set the example, and he expected his officers to be able to lead soldiers in every aspect of their duties.

There were times when all officers and enlisted were to train together. Training periods were from 2-6 days per year, and were supposedly mandatory for all males of military age, usually between 16-60 years. Training could include regimental on both horse and foot, musket, sword, marching, and other related subjects. One would have to question the quality of training considering the expertise of those who conducted the training, especially the officers.

No reference is made to pay for general officers during this period. Because they were men of the higher class and generally wealthy, it is most likely that they received no monetary pay; their pay was the privilege of serving and the prestige of being an officer. The pay for the other ranks is vague until 1790.

On April 30, 1790, Congress passed a statute dealing with "An Act for regulating the Military Establishment of the United States." Pay of the troops was addressed as follows:

Sec 5. And be further enacted, that the troops aforesaid shall receive for their services the following enumerated monthly rates of pay: Lieutenant-colonel commandant, sixty dollars; major commandant of artillery, forty-five dollars; majors, forty dollars; captains, thirty dollars; lieutenants, twenty-two dollars; ensigns, eighteen dollars; surgeons, thirty dollars; surgeon's mates, twenty-four dollars; sergenats, five dollars; corporals, four dollars; privates, three dollars; senior musician in each battalion of infantry, and in battalion of artillery, <sup>28</sup> five dollars; musicians, three dollars.

Congress did pass a statute part of which covered the pay of general officers on March 5, 1792. It allowed a monthly salary of one hundred and sixty-six dollars for a major general, and one hundred and four dollars for a brigadier general.<sup>29</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

One has to marvel at the success of our Revolutionary Army and her officers. The methods for officer selection and promotion, and the lack of formal military training for the majority of the officer corp leave much to speculation. Our ultimate success, that is our hard fought freedom and the establishment of the United States, does not appear to be the result of a highly efficient and a militarily-trained Army, but rather the compilation of a few competent and trained men and their officer and enlisted corps who were willing to sacrifice and make every effort toward a patriotic goal--freedom.

## ENDNOTES

1. Reverend Thompson P. Ege, DD History and Genealogy of the Ege Family in the United States 1738-1911, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Star Printing Company, 1911), p. 128.

2. Reverend Conway P. Wing, DD, 1731-1879 - History of Cumberland County, PA (with Illustrations), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: James D. Scott, 1879, pp. 24, 25.

3. The original will is held in the Cumberland County Court House Registry of Deeds and Wills. The total quantity of land left to John, his eldest son, and Matthew, his youngest son, total 1,106 acres all of which was productive farm area.

4. The author performed a title search of the Hoffer property and found it to be the same farm as that once owned by John Miller.

5. J. Zeamer, Graveyards of Cumberland County, Hamilton Library, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, p. 114.

6. Charles Beetem to Roland Fenton, 18 September 1935, Hamilton Library, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

7. Carlisle (Pennsylvania), Klines' Gazette, 17 January 1812, Carlisle Herald, 17 January 1812.

8. Carlisle (Pennsylvania), American Volunteer, 6 October 1831.

9. Cumberland County Tax Records, 1750-1814, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

10. "Generally, Miller's a Mystery," The Sentinel (Carlisle, Pennsylvania), 7 December 1985, p. A1. (Text at Appendix 1.)

11. Reverend Thompson P. Ege, DD, History and Genealogy of the Ege Family in the United States 1738-1911, p. 118. John Miller had two daughters, Ann and Elizabeth. Ann was basically disinherited after marrying Michael Lindsey and was left "a gold ring not to exceed a value of \$20." Elizabeth, more favored, received 20 acres of land, furnishings for a house and money. She also married the son of Michael Ege II, the iron baron of Boiling Springs who owned the iron forge which is famous in these parts for its cannon used during the Revolutionary War. Elizabeth's husband George Ege became very wealthy and owned and operated the iron forge in Holly Springs. Michael Ege II and John Miller must have been very close friends since Michael Ege witnessed John Miller's will less than a month before John Died. It is also interesting to note that John's brother, Matthew Miller, Jr., married into the Galbraith family. Three of the Galbraith sisters married Matthew Miller, Michael Ege III and

William Irvine (a neighbor of the Miller's, a fellow militiaman with both Millers and later a Major General in the Pennsylvania Militia.)

12. Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution, April 1775 to December 1783, Washington, D.C.: Rare Book Shop Publishing Company, 1914.

13. Reverend Thompson P. Ege, p. 118.

14. Colonel John B.B. Trussell, USA-Retired, Defending the Commonwealth, (Providence, Rhode Island: Mowbray Company-Publishers, 1980), pp. 1, 2.

15. Marvin Schlegel, Notes on Organization of the Pennsylvania Militia during the Revolution, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

16. Cumberland County Militia Arrangement of Officials, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

17. John Caruthers, Caruther's Fine Book, Microfilm, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, pp. 95, 339.

18. Militia Commissioning Book, Microfilm, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

19. Robert W. Coakley and Stetson Conn, The War of the American Revolution, p. 4.

20. Ibid., p. 5.

21. Ibid., p. 38.

22. A Historical Review of the Principle of Citizen Compulsion in the Raising of Armies, Backgrounds of Selective Service, No. 1, Volume 1, p. 89.

23. Robert W. Coakley and Stetson Conn, p. 37.

24. Ibid., p. 38.

25. Ibid., p. 38.

26. Louis Clinton Hatch, The Administration of the American Revolutionary Army, p. 70.

27. Robert W. Coakley and Stetson Conn, p. 274.

28. Background of Selective Service, p. 92.

29. Ibid., p. 97.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

American Volunteer (Carlisle), 6 October 1831.

Backgrounds of Selective Service, A Historical Review of the Principles of Citizen Compulsion in the Raising of Armies, No. 1, Volume 1. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1949.

Beetem, Charles and Fenton, Roland, 18 September 1935.  
Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Hamilton Library.

Birkhimer, William E., Historical Sketch of the Organization, Administration, Materiel, and Tactics of the Artillery, United States Army. Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1884.

Caruthers, John, John Caruthers Fine Book. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Archives.

Carlisle Herald (Carlisle, Pennsylvania), 17 January 1812.

Coakley, Robert W., and Conn, Stetson. The War of American Revolution. Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1975.

Ege, Thompson P., D.D., History and Genealogy of the Ege Family in the United States 1738-1911. Harrisburg: The Star Printing Company, 1911.

Hatch, Louis Clinton. The Administration of the American Revolutionary Army. New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1904.

Klines' Gazette (Carlisle, Pennsylvania), 17 January 1812.

Kremble, Robert C. The Image of the Army Officer in America. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1973.

Linn, John Blair, and Engle, William H. Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution, Battalions and Line, 1775-1783, Volume 1. Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, State Printer, 1880.

Linn, John Blair, and Engle, William H. Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution, Battalions and Line, 1775-1783, Volume 2. Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, State Printer, 1880.

Martin, James Kirby, and Lender, Mark Edward. A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763-1789. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Incorporated, 1982.

Montross, Lynn. Rag, Tag and Bobtail, The Story of the Continental Army, 1775-1783. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952.

Nalty, Bernard C. Marine Corps Officer Procurement, 1775-1955. Washington, D.C.: Department of Navy, 1962.

Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg. Cumberland County Militia Arrangement of Officials.

Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg. Cumberland County Tax Records, 1750-1814.

Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg. Militia Commissioning Book (Microfilm).

Royster, Charles . A Revolutionary People at War. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Sentinel (Carlisle), 7 December 1985.

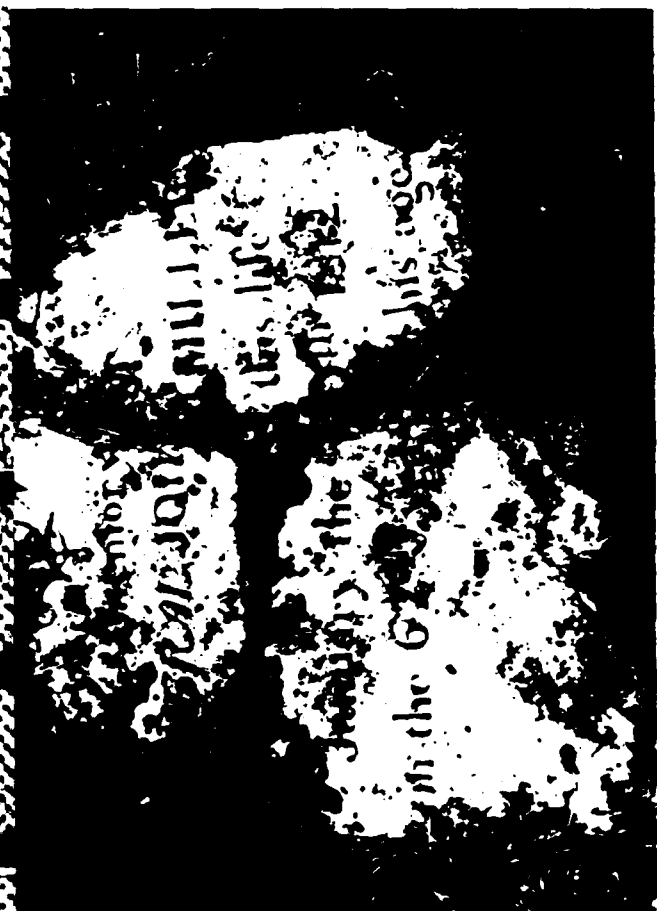
Schlegel, Marvin. Notes on Organization of the Pennsylvania Militia during the Revolution. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Archives.

Trussell, John B.B., Colonel (USA, Retired). Defending the Commonwealth. Providence, Rhode Island: Mowbray Company Publishers, 1980.

Ward, Christopher. The War of the Revolution. New York: MacMillan, 1952.

Wing, Conway P., D.D. 1731-1879 - History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania (with Illustrations). Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: James D. Scott, 1879.

Zeamer, J. Graveyards of Cumberland County. Hamilton Library, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.



WAR Revolutionary War and War of 1812

SURNAME MILLER

CHRISTIAN NAME John

AGE 67

BRANCH OF SERVICE Army-Militia

OUTFIT Continental Line RANK General

LENGTH OF SERVICE

BIRTH

1745-  
1846

DEATH 12-10-1812

CEMETERY, BURIAL GROUND, GRAVEYARD, ETC. Cornman--Christ Hoffer Farm (Originally Matthew Miller farm)

LOCATION OF CEMETERY Middlesex Township

LOCATION OF GRAVE

SECTION

RANGE

LOT

GRAVE 1

CHARACTER OF MEMORIAL Marble Slab

MARKER No

CONDITION OF GRAVE Deplorable

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION A search thorough a maze of historical data and records and extending over several states, as far west as California, has failed to reveal as much information as we desire regarding a man, who, at one time must have been of considerable influence in Cumberland County and who served in two wars, with the rank of General during one of the wars or in the militia formed after the Revolutionary War.

A search of the Penna. Archives by one of the enumerators, W. H. Porter, revealed that General Miller served in the Continental Line. (over.

DATE OF INSPECTION

The most explicit information relative to General Millers connection with the wars as a general is contained in the "History and Genealogy of the Ege Family", by Rev. Thompson Ege. On page 118 the author states that "George Ege, son of Michael Ege 2nd, married Elizabeth Miller, daughter of General John Miller of the wars of the Revolution and 1812."

(General) John Miller's will, filed Feb. 10, 1812 and recorded in Deed Book H, page 104 (Cumb. Co. Registers Office) discloses that John Miller had a daughter Elizabeth. Likewise, the same will shows that the codicil to the will was witnessed by Michael Ege.

All the above facts tend to confirm the fact that the General Miller referred to in the Ege History is the General Miller, whose record we are discussing and recording here.

John Miller resided on a farm closely adjoining the land owned by Col. (later General) Ephraim Blaine. General Blaine sought the assistance of his wealth neighbors in assisting in feeding Washington's army. It is my deduction that General Blaine may have been instrumental in having John Miller commissioned. A search of the Continental Congress papers fails, however, to confirm my thoughts in this connection. The rank "General" may have been obtained as a member of the famous "Bluediers", a militia organization of Middleton township. Many of these companies entered the Revolutionary War. However, Rev. Ege, the author, must have had definite knowledge that John Miller served as a General, for he has had the reputation of being a careful compiler.

--Robert S. Einstein.

# Generally, Miller's a mystery

By Jan Murphy  
Staff writer

Who was John Miller?  
Was he a long lost Revolutionary  
War general or a Cumberland  
County blacksmith?

The search for these answers has  
taken Lt. Col. John Gravois through  
piles of dusty, yellowing volumes of  
historical records in Cumberland  
County Courthouse, U.S. Army  
Military History Institute and the  
state archives.

Even though Gravois has mostly  
come across dead ends in his  
search, he doesn't regret  
accidentally stumbling upon the  
man's grave in a cow pasture  
behind the house he rents along  
Hickorytown Road in Middlesex  
Township.

The Army War College student  
says he saw a piece of marble  
partially sticking out of the ground  
early this fall and started digging.  
About six or seven inches below the  
surface, he found pieces of a marble  
and granite tombstone.

When pieced together, the  
inscription read: "Gen. John  
Miller," who died Jan. 10, 1812 "in  
the 67th year of his age."

Gravois says the rank and date  
raised the possibility that the  
general may have fought in the  
Revolutionary War.

So far, he says, "the only  
reference to Miller being a general  
is in his wife, Ann's obituary and the  
name on his tombstone. This could  
mean that she commissioned him."

He says Miller's obituary in two  
separate newspaper accounts refer  
to him only as "John Miller" with  
no reference to any military  
involvement.

Gravois and a classmate, Lt. Col.  
Rudy Stupar, decided to do their  
required War College study project  
on the early American  
commissioning processes, focusing  
on how Gen. John Miller came up  
through the ranks.

In the indexed volumes on the  
Pennsylvania militia, Gravois says  
they have come across several John  
Millers, who held a rank in the



Michael Rucker/The Sentinel

"I need someone with marble  
working expertise who could  
fabricate some of the pieces," he  
says. Also, he wants to put up a  
fence so the cows don't knock the  
tombstone over.

In Adam Zeamer's survey of early  
gravesites in Cumberland County  
done in 1965, he describes John  
Miller's tombstone as a granite slab  
that was "elevated on carved  
marble posts that bear evidence of  
having been a fine and expensive  
specimens of the stone cutter's art."

The lieutenant colonel says he has  
been getting a lot of help in trying to  
locate information from area  
history buffs.

"People say they remember his  
name but don't have any  
information," he says. "They say  
they'll help any way they can. I  
guess they feel the same way I do.  
Discovering a general from  
Cumberland County from those  
days would be a real find."

## John Gravois examines his backyard mystery.

commissioning processes alone  
"I feel I'm on a wild goose chase  
and I hope I find something soon,"  
he says. "If I don't, at least it will  
have been an interesting effort."

Regardless of whether or not  
Miller turns out to be a general,  
Gravois plans to restore the man's  
tombstone. He says he doesn't  
necessarily want money to help in  
the restoration, but is seeking help

references to a John Miller who was  
a general.  
If all else fails, Gravois says, "I  
will ask the state to dig up the grave  
to search for buttons or a sword  
down there that would give me a  
unit number."

Gravois says if he is able to  
trace Miller to a specific unit, he'll  
change the emphasis of his project  
from the general to the

military, but only two were from  
this area.

One was a Capt. John Miller from  
Cumberland County, but he wasn't  
the one buried in his backyard  
because the captain died in the  
Revolutionary War. Then, he  
discovered a "Gen. Miller" from  
York and after further checking,  
Gravois learned his first name was  
"Henry."

Other historical records show  
Miller may have been an elder in  
the Presbyterian church and a  
treasurer at Dickinson College. He  
had obtained the land from his  
father, Mathew, and passed it on to  
his wife and only son, Joseph.  
In county tax records, Gravois  
found two entries that indicate there  
was a blacksmith named John  
Miller who paid taxes in 1872.

He plans to check church records  
along with unindexed military  
records to see if he can find any

END

DTIC

9-86